

Join us
for our
**Church Baptism
Picnic**
August 5, 2018
1-4pm at
Clarks Bay

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FORTRESS OF
JOY CHURCH

Dealing With Persecution

The believer that "sells out" to Christ and lives an uncompromising life will be harassed and persecuted. This is the price you pay for putting your faith in the Holy One. Don't ever get discouraged, the rewards of faithfulness far outweigh the affects of persecution. Consider the Apostle Paul, the Lord called him up to heaven and gave him revelations the church desperately needed. When he began to preach those revelations, the devil manifested as a thorn in his flesh. The devil used Paul's own countrymen to attempt to stop him and even kill him.

the Lord supplied him with His grace.

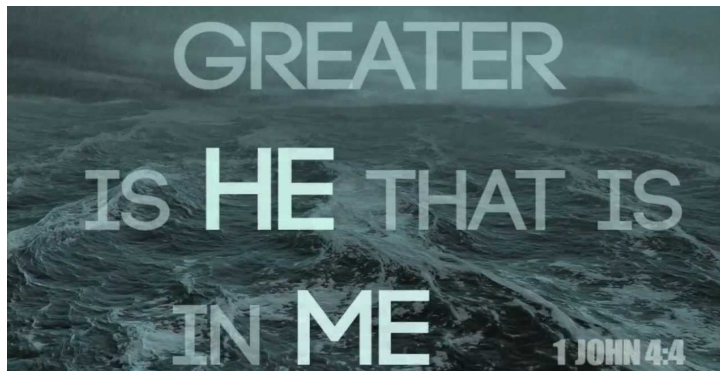
2 Corinthians 12:9
Most gladly therefore will I rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Paul was **empowered** to endure every assault of satan. The devil took his best shots but could not stop Paul. Now we know God is not a respecter of persons, so what He did for Paul He most assuredly will do for all of those who put their trust in Him.

their rewards on the table. Christianity is difficult when you live it in your own strength. When you surrender to the grace of God He will empower you to succeed in every battle. Do not think for one minute that the devil is going to just step aside and let you walk with your Lord unhindered.

1 Peter 4:12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange things happen to you.

Peter is exhorting us to watch and prepare for a visitation of evil, do not think you will be overlooked. The only people the devil doesn't target are those who pose no threat to him! If you cower back and will not promote or testify of Jesus, the devil won't waste his time on you. None of us will have to endure what Paul endured, but rest assured the devil has some naughty plans to derail us.



The Jews beat him five times with thirty nine stripes on his back using a cat o nine tails. They didn't give a man forty stripes because it might kill him, they were so considerate. One day they stoned him to death, but his friends prayed for him and he got up and continued to share those revelations. He asked the Lord three times to get the devil off his back, instead

2 Timothy 3:12 All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Paul was trying to find a way around the devil, but God wanted him to go through him. The only way to skirt around the devil is to compromise your faith, some have chosen this way. The devil set out a few snares and believers retreated, leaving

Isaiah 59:19 When the enemy comes in, like a flood the Spirit of God shall put him to flight.

I don't expect the devil to succeed, I expect God to put me over no matter what the devil tries. Greater is He Who is in me than he who is in the world.

Endure All Things

He has no regard for human life, he couldn't care less about who you are or what good things you have done.

When you are committed to the life of the believer, the devil put a contract out on you. You may be the nicest person in the whole world and you bless everyone, well the devil is not impressed. He targets "nice" people, he hates the righteous because it means you drew close to God. The devil is the original "spirit of division", there is no telling how many divorces he's instigated. The devil has no favorites, he even went after the Son of God.

Luke 18:31, 34 Jesus spoke to His twelve disciples and told them how He would be scourged and put to death. And they understood not.

GREATER IS HE THAT IS IN YOU, THAN HE THAT IS IN THE WORLD.

- 1 John 4:4 KJV -

I have studied this Scripture thoroughly and from other translations I got a clear picture of this event. Jesus was telling His disciples what He was headed for based on what the prophets foretold. He was not being a "drama queen", He was not looking for sympathy, He wanted His boys to

know what was coming. The disciples didn't understand because they didn't understand prophecy. They didn't fully grasp the words of Christ until after He died and the Holy Ghost came upon them. We should never "fall apart" when the devil comes to try our faith, he should never catch us off guard. Nor should we be shocked over what that killer is willing to do. He has no regard for human life, he couldn't care less about who you are or what good things you have done.

Hebrews 12:2 Look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; Who for the JOY that was set before Him endured the cross.

How could Jesus count it a joy to be tortured on the cross? Because He knew how it would all turn out. Yes, He would suffer a terrible death and then spend three days in hell and in torment. But then He would be raised from the dead and lead all those people in Abraham's bosom to heaven and present them to His Father. Mission accomplished. Now concerning our own life and trials, we have a tendency to make a big deal out of something that is not a big deal to begin with. Remember what Peter said: think it not strange the fiery trial that is to try you!



John 16:33 In the world you will have tribulation (pressure-affliction-persecution-trouble) but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world (for you).

No matter what the devil throws at you, Jesus has already given you the victory over it. Every plot and plan of the devil is doomed to failure if we put our trust in our Lord Jesus. The devil is looking for the Christian who relies on their flesh for deliverance, they're an easy mark. You do not wait for the devil to come knock on your door and then figure out how to deal with him. You prepare for the day he comes and he will surely come. This is not a "bad confession", it is the life of a believer, we love God and the devil hates us. I don't think most Christians ever know why they have so many problems. They have little or no spiritual discernment, they think "men" are their problem and so they fight the wrong battle.

A World Full Of Hate

One would think that if you just be a Christian and attend church occasionally, no one would bother you. But this is not the case, anyone who is committed to living for Christ is hated by the world. Why do they hate us?

Mathew 24:12 Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

sin. The world hates those who call them to accountability, they do not like to be judged. If they spurn the judgement in this world, how do you suppose they will feel when they stand before the great white throne? We can judge ourselves now or we can put it off and let the Lord make the final call! Who would judge themselves? Those who love the Lord, those who believe Him.

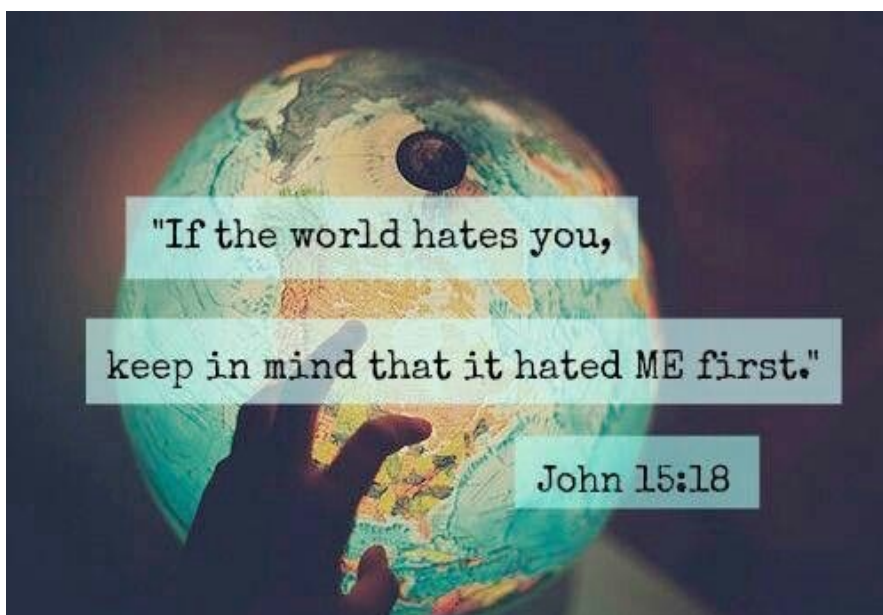
oring to keep his promises. The world hates everything that is right and just because it's contrary to their agenda.

Proverbs 26:2 Curses cannot hurt you unless you deserve them. They are like birds that fly by and never settle.

When the world hates you they will spew their desire on your life, but because it's a fake curse it will not harm you. We must never allow ourselves to be shaken by what the world speaks over us, they are just words that fall to the ground.

1 Corinthians 4:3 It is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgement: I judge not mine own self.

Paul politely and firmly told the people that what they thought of him meant nothing to him. He paid attention to what Jesus the righteous judge said about him, not people. If a person gives heed to everything others say to him, he is no longer his own person. He will find himself defending the desires of people he may not even agree with. Folks, we cannot stop people from hating us unless we compromise our convictions. Can't we all just get along? Only if we all agree with the Words of Jesus. We will not be able to walk with those who hate our Lord.



People who are addicted to sin do not have the God kind of love, they have love but it is performance based. If you do something that benefits them they love you but if you oppose their lifestyle they will hate you.

The church is the conscience of the world.

The Lord told me this years ago, the world has had its conscience seared with a hot iron. They call good evil and evil good, this is a fulfillment of Isaiah the prophet. The church has become an enemy to the sinner because they call sin,

John 15:18 If the world hate you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.

The world doesn't even know Jesus and yet they hate Him! If a sinner closes his ears to the truth, can he then be exempt from it? Only in their mind. God will not be mocked, every man will reap what he sows. If you are a supporter of our president you are hated, they do not believe he should be in that office, they believe a woman should be in there. They hate our president because he follows our laws and is endeavoring to keep his promises.

If a sinner closes his ears to the truth, can he then be exempt from it?

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**Restoring the
supernatural power
of God back
to the local church**

Diffusing Hatred

When you are hated, the hate will challenge you. People want to provoke a reaction, they want you to hate back. They want a war no one can win, they just want their belief to be heard loud and clear. They are not interested in having an adult conversation because that is the rational thing to do. An adult conversation is based on mutual respect and they don't have that.

Matthew 5:44 I say to you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you.

When people hate you and you don't respond in kind, you disappoint them and their agenda. Why does God tell us

to love them? Because their decision to hate is not their own, they are fulfilling the lusts of their father the devil. When a man starts out to begin a war and he can't find anyone to fight with him, he gains nothing. One day two men got together and began to tell lies about me so I began to pray for them. The Lord told me to give them each fifty dollars, they stopped gossiping and became supportive.

Father forgive them, they know not what they are doing.

The men who crucified Jesus were responding to what the leaders wanted. They were obeying the devil, they did not know what they were doing, but Jesus did.

